

each sides view point. The entire gamut of our relations were discussed during these talks. India emphasised the need to build an atmosphere of trust for progress on all outstanding issues including Jammu & Kashmir. We also focussed on cross-border terrorism and conveyed that India had the resolve, strength and stamina to counter terrorism and violence till it was decisively crushed.

In addition to the above meetings, in June 1999, External Affairs Minister Shri Jaswant Singh met his Pakistani counterpart Mr. Sartaj Aziz at New Delhi, during the Kargil conflict. During this meeting Pakistan was told in clear terms that Pakistan's armed intrusion and aggression at Kargil has to be vacated.

Recognition of Musharraf by India

1283. SHRI KARNENDU BHATTACHARJEE: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news-item under the heading "History may blame India for recognising Musharraf" which appeared in the Hindustan Times dated the 21st June, 2001;

(b) if so, Government's reaction thereto; and

(c) whether it is a fact that India was the first country to have recognised General Pervez Musharraf's self-appointment as the President of Pakistan while global international community did not react favourably to this position and if so, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI OMAR ABDULLAH): (a) Yes, Sir. Government have seen the report appearing in the Hindustan Times on 21st June 2001.

(b) and (c) The Prime Minister's invitation to the President of Pakistan, General Pervez Musharraf was an act of great statesmanship, and in keeping with our traditional approaches to

Pakistan, which seek to build a relationship of peace, friendship and cooperation with that country.

As the largest democracy in the world, India naturally supports the international trend towards democracy. Along with other like-minded countries, we regret and condemn the subversion of democratic governance in any country through force and unconstitutional means.

Establishment of N.M.D. System

1284. SHRI KARNENDU BHATTACHARJEE: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Prime Minister, in a statement made on 11th May, 2001, has endorsed the proposal of the United States for establishment of a National Missile Defence System (NMDS);

(b) if so, whether this policy is intended to usher in a shift of Government's on foreign and defence policy; and

(c) whether Government have considered carefully the various possibilities before declaring a new policy affecting defence and foreign affairs?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI OMAR ABDULLAH): (a) In his address at the DRDO Awards Ceremony on 11th May 2001, Prime Minister, while emphasising India's firm commitment to nuclear disarmament, said that "We have never subscribed to concepts of military dominance or doctrines of mutually assured destruction. We welcome every move towards lightening the shadow of the nuclear terror under which we live today. It is in this context that we have welcomed US President Bush's suggestions for steep reductions in nuclear arsenals and a move away from further development of offensive nuclear technologies. We have also welcomed his offer of consultations with allies and major powers on a new framework of security. We believe that a genuine process of consultations, including nuclear and non-nuclear countries and taking into account existing arrangements in the security architecture, can promote the search